

Message Text

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ACTION COA-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CG-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 INR-10 L-03

NEA-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 USIA-15

TRSE-00 SAJ-01 SS-20 NSC-10 DODE-00 DLOS-06 IO-14

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4853

INFO AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY BONN

USCINCEUR

CINCLANT

COMICEDEFOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 12024

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PBOR, UK, IC

SUBJECT: ICELANDIC FISHERIES DISPUTE

1. PRELIMINARY INFORMATION WE HAVE HAD FROM FOREIGN OFFICE IS THAT UK AND ICELANDIC PRIME MINISTERS HAVE HAD MEETING OF MINDS ON FISHERIES DISPUTE. WIGGIN TOLD US TODAY THAT IT APPEARS THAT UK AND ICELAND HAVE REACHED ESSENTIAL AGREEMENT ON MAIN OUTSTANDING ISSUES. BRITISH HAVE GONE DOWN AS FAR AS THEY CAN ON CATCH LIMITATION. ICELAND HAS AGREED TO DEFER TO LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE QUESTION OF JURISDICTION. UNDERSTANDING ALSO REACHED ON DURATION OF INTERIM AGREEMENT, SIZE AND TYPES OF BRITISH TRAWLER FLEET.

2. JOHANNESSON HAS TOLD BRITISH THAT HE MUST CONSULT HIS CABINET COLLEAGUES, SO UNDERSTANDING IS APPARENTLY MORE AD REFERENDUM THAN BRITISH WOULD HAVE LIKED, BUT AT THIS POINT IT APPEARS TALKS HAVE BEEN PRODUCTIVE. HOWEVER, CONFIDENTIAL

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ACCORDING TO WIGGIN, BIG QUESTION IN BRITISH MINDS IS

WHETHER JOHANNESSON CAN DELIVER WITH HIS COLLEAGUES, PRIMARILY JOSEFSSON. WIGGIN SAID THAT IF CATCH LIMITATION PROPOSED BY BRITISH IS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO ICELANDIC CABINET BRITISH WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO MAKE FURTHER CONCESSIONS.

3. PRESS TODAY NOTES THAT FOREIGN OFFICE SPOKESMAN DESCRIBED TALKS YESTERDAY AS "VERY FRIENDLY." JOHANNESSON HAS STRUCK POSITIVE AND ENCOURAGING NOTE IN HIS PUBLIC STATEMENTS HERE. ATMOSPHERE IS DEFINITELY GOOD. IT REMAIN TO BE SEEN WHETHER WHAT APPEARS TO BE A WORKABLE INTERIM SOLUTION WILL STAND THE TEST OF THE SCRUTINY OF THE ICELANDIC CABINET.

4. FOREGOING IS VERY PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF VISIT OF ICELANDIC PRIME MINISTER. WE WILL FOLLOW UP IN MORE DETAIL WITH BRITISH IN DUE COURSE. ANNENBERG

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